

## HURLING LIMERICK U-21 FINALS

### LIMERICK U-21 PREMIER HC FINAL

# Na Piarsaigh carry on where they left off - with more success

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No doubting Na Piarsaigh's superiority as they claim U-21 title with stylish display

Na Piarsaigh	2-17
Doon	3-10

**Jerome O'Connell**  
In Bruff

NA Piarsaigh have started back where they finished last season, by lifting more silverware.

But this U-21 premier hurling championship title was the one that got away last season and thus making this victory all the more important for the Caherdavin side.

Last year they had to play Kilmallock in the final just six days after their historic senior victory and the heart break of that defeat certainly spurred them this season.

The city side avenged the Kilmallock loss in the semi-final and in this decider looked the champions from a long way out.

Goals in either half from Limerick seniors Shane Dowling and Kevin Downes powered them towards the title.

They were 2-15 to 1-7 clear as the game entered the final 10 minutes.

Two late goals from Doon reduced the final margin but Na Piarsaigh always looked comfortable, albeit they were slow to settle.

It was Doon that raced into a 1-4 to 0-2 lead inside the opening quarter.

There lead could have been greater but for five first half wides when they were on top.

Clearly buoyed up the east Limerick men had a Cathal McNamara '65 to get them started but then Dean Coleman scored a great point from a tight angle on the right.

Coleman was one of nine minors in the

starting line-up and in total over two thirds of their starting team will be underage next season.

After Eoghan Keogh had replied for Na Piarsaigh Pat Ryan scored from the left as Doon looked very comfortable with McNamara and Darragh Stapleton inspiring from the half back line.

Another fine score from Dara Donovan had them 0-4 to 0-2 clear when their goal arrived.

Coleman's initial shot was superbly saved by Evan Condon but the loose ball fell to Pat Ryan and although the goalkeeper advanced the sliothar bounced off his back to the net and past two defenders on the line.

Doon were five points clear and looking good but that was as good as it got as they were to only score one more point in the half as Na Piarsaigh were stung into life.

Shane Dowling goaled in the 16th minute as the eventual winners hit 10 successive scores to seize the initiative and a 1-11 to 1-4 lead.

Adrian Breen, Eoghan Keogh and inter-county seniors Dowling and Downes all fired over points as the men in blue blitzed Doon in a 15-minute spell.

Indeed the light blues could have grabbed a second goal but for a fine save from Colm O'Cuimin from Eoghan Keogh in the 30th minute. In first half injury time Liam Ryan pointed for Doon to end over 20 minutes without a score for the underdogs. But still they trailed 1-11 to 1-5 at the break.

On the resumption, Na Piarsaigh goaled after just seven minutes when Downes held off his marker to fire to the net after Alan Dempsey delivered.

Two Dowling frees either side, had the winners 2-13 to 1-6 clear with over 20-minutes



to play.

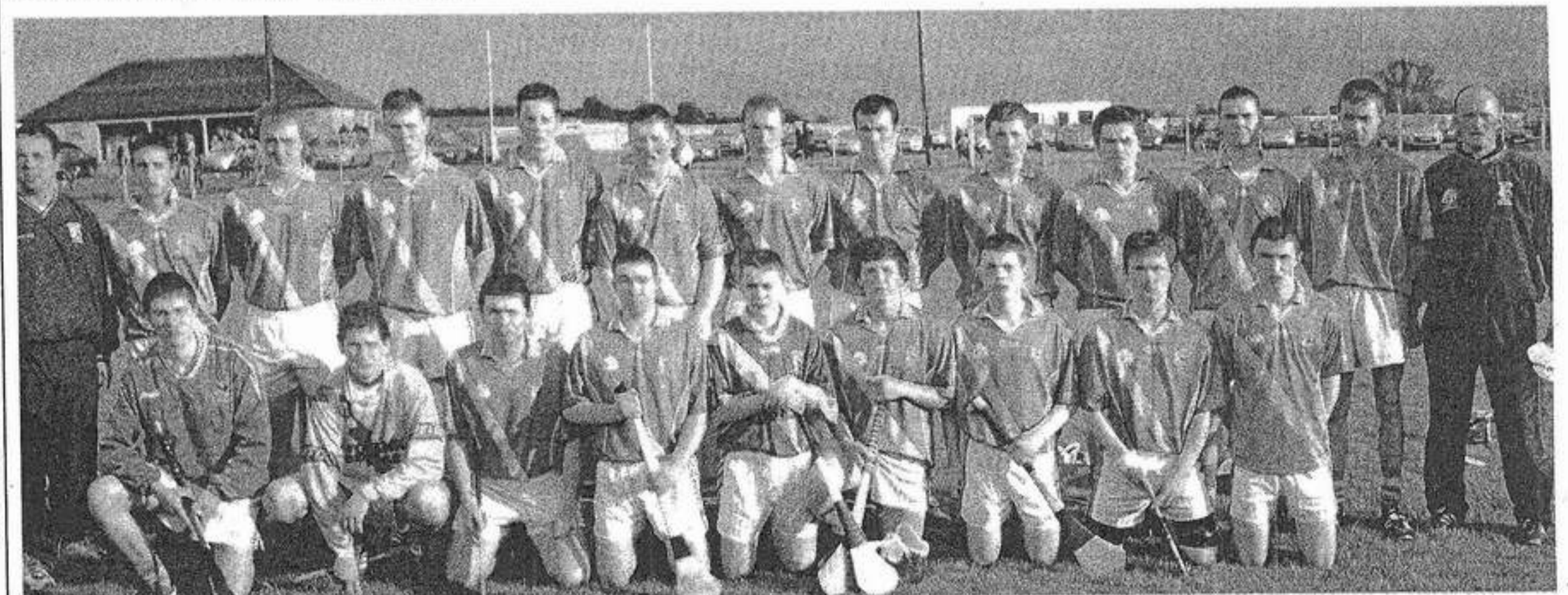
Then the Doon cause became an even greater task when young full back Richard English was sent-off for a second yellow card offence.

This allowed Na Piarsaigh to position Alan Dempsey as the free man in defence and he swept up everything for the final quarter.

Dara Donovan frees kept Doon ticking over but Na Piarsaigh continued to extend their lead with sub David Dempsey among the scores.

The lead was at 11-points when the late fight back from Doon emerged.

### LIMERICK U-21 'A' HC FINAL



The Ahane U-21 team that beat Kilfrush Gaels in the Limerick U-21 'A' final in Caherconlish last Saturday



HURLING LIMERICK U-21 FINALS



The Na Piarasigh team celebrate their Limerick U-21 HC final win over Doon in Bruff last Saturday. Picture: Keith Wiseman

It was kick-started six minutes from time when centre back Cathal McNamara crashed a 25-metre free to the net and the lead was 2-15 to 2-8 with five minutes to play.

Just a minute later McNamara stood over another free and went for goal and this time it was captain Niall Buckley that saved on the line.

But the ball wasn't fully cleared and in a crowded goalmouth numerous half chances were cleared as Doon sought another goal.

Three minutes from full time the goal arrived and again it was McNamara, who hadn't retreated back into defence, that appeared to

kick the ball over the line.

The lead was now down to four points from 11 and Na Piarasigh were on the back foot, albeit time was running out.

Just went they needed to alleviate some tension up popped Adrian Breen with this first score in 13-minutes.

Dara Donovan again hit back for the underdogs but the response this time was instant with Kevin Downes firing over with the game now in injury-time.

The final score went to McNamara with another free but this time from long range.

With almost the final strike of a game Na

Piarasigh's Condon saved a goalbound effort but already the Caherdavin side's name was on the trophy.

It was a seventh title for Na Piarasigh at this grade - 1989, 1990, '93, '95, 2004, 2010 and 2012.

And, the bad news for all others in the county is that many of their side will be underage again next year.

Doon, meanwhile, will also certainly be in the mix next season but for the majority of their side the attention now turns to the county premier minor championship where they are among the leading fancies along with champions Na Piarasigh and Patrickswell.

**SCORES: NA PIARSAIGH** - Shane Dowling 1-8 (0-5frees), Kevin Downes 1-2, Adrian Breen 0-3, Eoghan Keogh 0-2, Mark Ryan, David Dempsey 0-1 each. **DOON**: Cathal McNamara 2-2 (1-1frees, '65), Pat Ryan 1-1, Dara Donovan 0-4 (2frees), Dean Coleman, Liam Ryan, Michael Barry 0-1 each. **NA PIARSAIGH** - Evan Condon; Ian Hickey, Niall Buckley, Kevin McNamara; Mark Buckley, Alan Dempsey, Peter Hodnett; Mark Ryan, William O'Donoghue; Kevin Downes, Shane Dowling, Michael Foley; David Sheppard, Adrian Breen, Eoghan Keogh. **Subs**: David Dempsey for Ian Hickey (h-t), Josh O'Halloran for David Sheppard (38mins). **DOON** - Colm O'Ciumhain; Jack Hayes, Richard English, Steven Ryan; Darragh Stapleton, Cathal McNamara, Liam Ryan; John Hayes, Ger Crowe; Michael Barry, Dara Donovan, Tony Joe Berkery; Pat Ryan, Ger McPartland, Dean Coleman. **Subs**: Michael Cummins for Ger Crowe (h-t), Conor White for Jack Hayes (38mins), Luke Treacy for John Hayes (55mins). **REFEREE** - Brendan Stack (Newcastle West).

# Ryan on fire as Ahane finish strong to claim U-21 'A'

Ahane	1-18
Kilfrush Gaels	0-17

**John Redington**  
In Caherconlish

A fourth quarter revival, capped by top scorer Richard Ryan's only goal of a high-scoring final, delivered the County under-21 A hurling title to Ahane in Caherconlish on Saturday evening.

Yet up to that point, the Castleconnell club looked very much like coming off second best to the Hospital-Herbertstown and Garryspillane amalgamation Kilfrush Gaels who had not only moved into

dominance of the middle but were punishing every indiscretion through the free-taking of Aaron Murphy and Shaun Prenderville.

In the end, however, they ran out of options. Although Ahane lost centre-back Cathal Ryan to a knee injury and his replacement Shane Ahern just after the break, they had more depth.

They were able to find the mix that broke the stranglehold of Murphy and Danny Hayes and provide Dan Morrissey with the opportunity to open up space for his forwards.

Although Ahane had most of the early possession, they had a 20 meter free stopped on the line and Kilfrush showed them how to take their chances as a long Murphy free and Hayes got them off the mark. When

the Castleconnell side found their range, Tom Doheny, Andrew Minehan and sub Ahern put them in front but Murphy and Hayes were taking over in the middle.

An exchange between Hayes and Ryan's free and between Keith O'Connor and Doheny mirrored the tight contest but Ahane lost their sharpness and struck a string of wides.

They also began to concede fouls for Prenderville, Murphy twice and Shaun Prenderville to convert and, with the momentum behind them, Kevin O'Donoghue, O'Connor and Murphy's '65' stretched the gap to five. Ryan's free broke the streak and, after Hayes's reply, he sent over another to leave Ahane trailing 0-12

to 0-8 at the break.

Kilfrush looked to have soaked up their opponents' restart when two Prenderville free either side of his strike from play more than wiped out Ryan's free and Fox's score on the turn.

But Ryan's move out deeper did for their control of the middle and, while Murphy replied to a pair of Ryan frees, Morrissey was moving into top gear.

Two more Ryan frees and Morrissey had the gap back to the minimum and, while the freetaker's touch suddenly left him, his goal chance blocked by Eoin Murphy was followed by Morrissey's equaliser.

The dam broke when Ryan caught high and danced twice before burying the game's only goal and Morrissey's

'65' and Ryan put the game beyond reach.

**SCORERS** - Ahane: Richard Ryan 1-9 (0-8 frees), Tom Doheny, Shane Ahern, Dan Morrissey ('65) 0-2 each, Andrew Minehan, John Fox and Killian Enright 0-1 each. **Kilfrush Gaels**: Aaron Murphy 0-5 (three frees, one '65'), Shaun Prenderville 0-5 (four frees), Danny Hayes 0-4 (one free), Keith O'Connor 0-2, Kevin O'Donoghue 0-1. **AHANE** - Barry Neville; Conor McNamara, Al Dolan, Jeffrey Enright; Enda Carroll, Cathal Ryan, Ryan McCauley; John Fox, Dan Morrissey; Andrew Minehan, Séamus Hartnett, Richard Ryan; Killian Enright, Mark Kennedy, Tom Doheny. **Subs**: Shane Ahern for Cathal Ryan (8 mins), Stephen Power for Shane Ahern (35 mins). **KILFRUSH GAELS** - Eoin Murphy; Sam Kelly, Darragh R O'Sullivan, John Connolly; John McCarthy, Mike O'Neill, Mike Davern; Danny Hayes, Aaron Murphy; Declan Barry; Kevin O'Donoghue, Seán Kearney; Kevin O'Connor, Kevin Meade, Shaun Prenderville. **Subs**: Micheál English for John Connolly (ht), Mikey Bob Ryan for Seán Kearney (44 mins), Darragh M O'Sullivan for Kevin Meade (58 mins). **REFEREE** - Jason O'Mahony (Kildimo).